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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------181820 098240 /42
P R 181824Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9896
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 05108

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, PFOR, PARM, FR
SUBJ: FRANCE AND NATO

REFS: A. USNATO 0732 DTG 101750Z FEB '77.
B. USNATO 0747 DTG 111104Z FEB '77.
C. USNATO 0797 DTG 141025Z FEB '77.
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D. STATE 034957 DTG 160044Z FEB '77.

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: EMBASSY PARIS DOES NOT AGREE WITH LUNS, HARTOGH, OR OTHERS WHO BELIEVE THAT FRANCE IS OUT TO WEAKEN NATO. THE CURRENT GOF IS CONFRONTED WITH SERIOUS DOMESTIC ELECTORAL PROBLEMS WHICH RENDER IT MORE HESITANT THAN USUAL TO BE SEEN EMPHASIZING NATO BUSI-

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NESS. GIVEN THE HISTORY OF FRENCH-NATO RELATIONS SINCE THE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE INTEGRATED MILITARY COMMAND, AND THE STRICT CONSTRUCTION APPROACH WHICH FRANCE TAKES TOWARDS NATO CONSULTATIONS, WE AGREE WITH THE DEPARTMENT THAT WE WOULD BE WELL-ADVISED TO AVOID ACTIONS WHICH WILL CONFRONT THE FRENCH WITH DECISIONS IN WHICH THEY ARE OBLIGED TO STAND ON PRINCIPLE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN REFERENCE TO THE DANISH PROPOSALS ON NATO ARMS CONTROL EFFORTS (REF A), WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBT THAT FRENCH PERMREP TINE WAS ACTING UNDER CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE QUAI D'ORSAY. THIS HAS BEEN CONFIRMED TO US BY TWO SEPARATE QUAI SOURCES. THE FRENCH ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT ANY OPEN-ENDED, UNSTRUCTURED ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVES WHEN THEY HAVE NO WAY OF FORESEEING THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME. WE NOTE THAT IN PARA 1 OF REF A TINE EXPRESSED HOPE FOR CONSULTATIONS ON ARMS CONTROL PROPOSALS COMING FROM THE US. THIS SAME THEME HAS BEEN ECHOED IN PARIS BY BOTH OFFICIAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL SOURCES. THE FRENCH ARE INDEED WILLING TO ANALYZE SOVIET ARMS CONTROL PROPOSALS AS THEY WILLINGLY DID IN THE CASE OF LAST FALL'S SOVIET NO-FIRST-USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS INITIATIVE.

3. TINE'S REMARKS REPORTED IN LAST SENTENCE PARA 5, REF A, WERE CLEARLY AIMED WITH MALICE AFORETHOUGHT AT THE DANES. TINE NOTED THAT SOME ALLIES PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS IN THE UN WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS, AND SUPPORTED IN THE UN PROPOSALS CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE TO
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ALL THE ALLIES. THIS WAS A CLEAR REFERENCE TO DANISH SUPPORT IN LAST FALL'S UNGA FOR COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN PROPOSALS WHICH ARE ANATHEMA TO THE GOF. THUS IT WAS THAT TINE URGED FURTHER REFLECTION IN CAPITALS AND AT NATO ON HOW THE ALLIES COULD ACHIEVE GREATER UNITY IN THIS AREA AND OVERCOME "THEIR REGRETTABLE LACK OF COHERENCE."

4. WHILE WE DID NOT HAVE THE BENEFIT OF DEALING WITH TINE ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS, WE ARE SKEPTICAL OF LUNS' REMARK REPORTED PARA 8, REF A, WHICH ASCRIBES TINE'S POSITION TO THE LATTER'S "ANTI-AMERICAN BIAS" AND "DETERMINATION TO UNDERCUT THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS EXCEPT ON THE NARROWEST MILITARY ISSUES AND OTHER ISSUES ON WHICH THE FRENCH WANT TO CONSULT." ADDRESSEES WOULD DO WELL TO REMEMBER THAT HISTORICALLY FRANCE HAS TAKEN A STRICT CONSTRUCTION APPROACH TO NATO CONSULTATIONS, GENERALLY ARGUING THAT THESE CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BE CONFINED TO MATTERS DERIVING DI-

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RECTLY FROM THE TREATY ITSELF OR THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA
DEMARCATED THEREIN.

5. IN REFERRING TO THE PROPOSED NAC BRIEFING ON THE

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 05108

EXDIS NOFORN

MIDDLE EAST, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE FRENCH WOULD
OBJECT AT ALL TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S BRIEF-
ING OF THE COUNCIL. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY
IN THE CASE OF SUCH SPECIAL BRIEFINGS THAT THE OTHER
ALLIANCE MEMBERS BE INVITED BY EITHER LUNS OR THE US
MISSION TO SEND EXPERTS FROM CAPITALS. ASSUMING THAT
OUR OTHER ALLIES HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT TO BE
DISCUSSED, PRESUMABLY THEY WILL SEND EXPERTS FROM

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CAPITALS IF THEY SO CHOOSE.
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6. WE FIND UNFORTUNATE LUNS' AND HARTOGH'S COMMENTS IN REF C WHICH CONCLUDE THAT FRANCE AND OTHERS MAY BE SEEKING TO ENHANCE THE EC-9 AT THE EXPENSE OF NATO. FIRST, WE THINK THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE. WHENEVER THE EC-9 CAN DEVELOP COHESION ON A SUBJECT, CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE 15 SEEM TO IMPROVE AS WELL. IN THIS REGARD, COOPERATION WITHIN THE NINE ON CSCE, AND THEN BETWEEN THE NINE AND THE FIFTEEN THROUGHOUT THE GENEVA PERIOD APPEAR FROM THIS OPTIC TO HAVE BEEN EXEMPLARY. IN ADDITION, THE FRENCH DO NOT VIEW THE EC AS THE ONLY FORUM FOR DISCUSSION OR DEVELOPMENT OF POSITIONS ON SUBSTANTIVE POLITICAL QUESTIONS. HERE WE HAVE IN MIND FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN THE LONDON SUPPLIERS CLUB ON CIVIL NUCLEAR EXPORTS, THE RESULTS OF WHICH COULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ATTAINED AMONG THE FIFTEEN AT NATO. IN GENERAL, IT SEEMS TO THIS EMBASSY THAT ANY IMPROVEMENT OF POLITICAL COORDINATION AMONG THE NINE CAN ONLY STRENGTHEN WESTERN EUROPE IN EVERY DIMENSION, AND WE FAIL TO SEE HOW THIS COULD REBOUND TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF NATO OR THE UNITED STATES.

7. ANNOYING AS THE FRENCH CAN BE ON NATO CONSULTATIONS, WE WOULD NOT EXTRAPOLATE FROM THIS THAT THE FRENCH WANT TO GET THE US OUT OF EUROPE AS LUNS COMMENTED IN PARA 3 REF C. THE CURRENT FRENCH GOVERNMENT PLACES GREATER VALUE ON THE US IN THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE THAN ANY IN THE LAST TEN YEARS. IF ANYTHING, FRANCE IS CLOSER TO THE US AND NATO IN TERMS OF BEHIND-THE-SCENES MILITARY AND POLITICAL COOPERATION THAN IT HAS BEEN AT ANY POINT IN THE LAST DECADE.

8. THUS WE ARE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT (REF D) IN URGING THAT WE AVOID ACTIONS WHICH WILL CONFRONT THE FRENCH WITH DECISIONS IN WHICH THEY ARE OBLIGED TO STAND ON PRINCIPLE. IF WE PUSH THE
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FRENCH UP AGAINST THE WALL ON EVERY NATO ISSUE, THEY MAY WELL SUCCEED IN EXACERBATING FRENCH-NATO RELATIONSHIPS TO THE DETRIMENT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE AND POLITICAL COOPERATIONS. THEREFORE, WE WOULD URGE COOL HEADS AND A DISCREET APPROACH TO PROBLEMS IN AN

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ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THEM AT THE WORKING LEVEL AS HAS RECENTLY BEEN DONE WITH REGARD TO THE FRENCH POSITION ON THE DPC TASKING OF NATO POLITICAL BODIES AND ON THE FRENCH FOOTNOTE CONCERNING INTERNAL NATO DOCUMENTS ON MBFR.
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